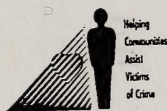


AL1.1349c2

# VICTIMS PROGRAMS

## STATUS REPORT

1998/99



Alberta  
JUSTICE



## VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

### *History*

The *Victims' Programs Assistance Act*, proclaimed January 16, 1991, established the Victims Programs Assistance Fund and provided for the appointment of a Victims Programs Assistance Committee. The Committee was established to review grant applications submitted by groups and organizations who provide programs and services that benefit victims of crime and make recommendations respecting funding to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

The *Victims of Crime Act* (VOCA) was proclaimed August 1, 1997, for all provisions of the *Act*, except those directly associated with the delivery of financial benefits to individual victims of crime. On November 1, 1997, the financial benefits section was proclaimed. The *Act* replaces the *Victims' Programs Assistance* and *Criminal Injuries Compensation Acts* and establishes the authority to collect surcharges of 15% on provincial statute offences.

A Fund is established into which provincial and federal surcharges are collected and deposited. Section 10 of the *Act* provides for payments from the Fund. This includes grants approved by the Minister of Justice, costs incurred by the Victims of Crime Programs Committee, the Criminal Injuries Appeal Board, expenses to persons whose services are engaged by the Minister of Justice and financial benefits payable to victims of crime for injuries suffered. Salaries, benefits and other expenditures related to the administration of the *Act* are also paid from the Fund.

The *Act* includes principles respecting the treatment of victims and establishes rights for victims to obtain certain information.

An office of the Director, *Victims of Crime Act* is created. This office operates within Public Security Division, Alberta Justice and is responsible for the administration of the *Act*. Victims who do not feel they have been treated in accordance with the principles of the *Act* can obtain information from this office as to how to resolve their concerns.

Two core programs operate under VOCA - a financial benefits program for individual victims who have suffered injury as a result of a criminal offence and a grants program that provides funding to groups and organizations offering information, assistance and support to victims during their involvement in the criminal justice process.

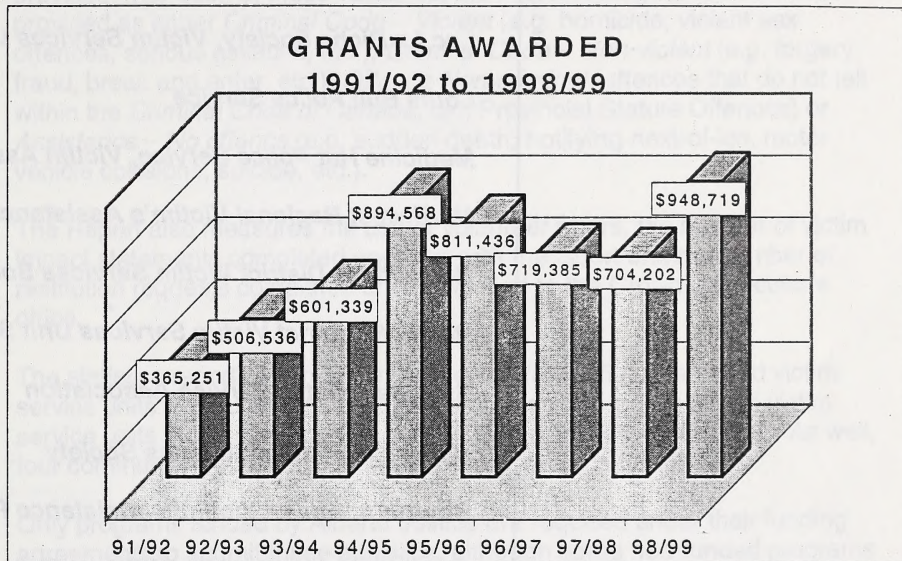
The *Act* establishes the Victims of Crime Programs Committee appointed by the Minister. The Committee evaluates applications for grants to programs and makes recommendations to the Minister on grant funding. Funding decisions made are based on the Committee's recommendations.



## Grants Awarded

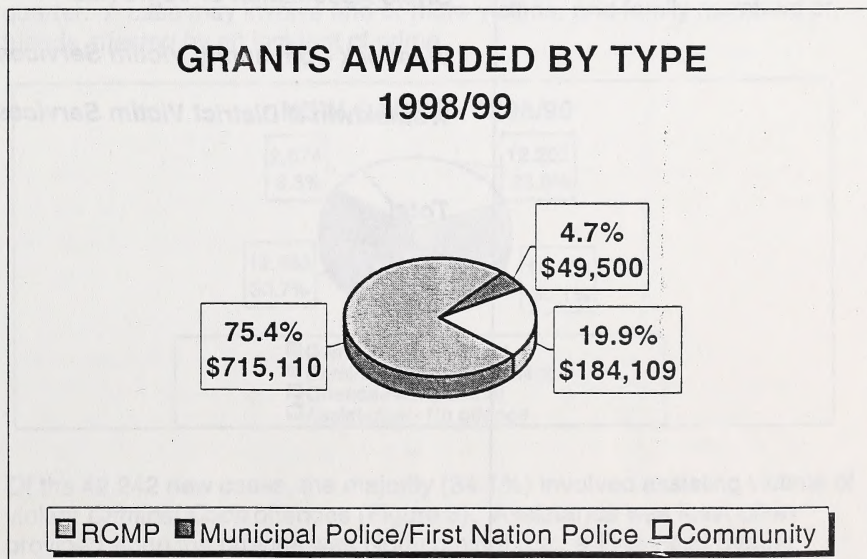
The grant application deadlines for the 1998/99 fiscal year were April 1 and October 1, 1998. Forty-five applications were evaluated by the Committee and forty-three grants totaling \$948,719 were approved and awarded. This amount represents a 35% increase in grant funding over 1997/98 (Figure 1).

Figure 1



Grants to police-based victim assistance programs accounted for 80% of the total grants allocated in 1998/99. Although police-based programs have received funding priority, other community groups and organizations that provide services to victims of have also received funding.

Figure 2



<i>The Volunteer Programs Association - Fort Saskatchewan</i>	<i>\$14,000</i>
<i>Grande Prairie &amp; District RCMP Victims' Assistance Program Association</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>
<i>High Prairie &amp; District RCMP Victim Assistance Society</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>
<i>Lac La Biche Society, Victim Services Unit</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>
<i>Louis Bull Police Service</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>
<i>Medicine Hat Police Service, Victim Assistance Unit</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>
<i>Northwest Regional Victim's Assistance Society (NRVAS)</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>
<i>Redwater &amp; District Victim Services Society</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>
<i>Rocky &amp; District Victim Services Unit Society</i>	<i>\$23,000</i>
<i>St. Albert Victim Service Association</i>	<i>\$22,000</i>
<i>Slave Lake Victim Services Society</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>
<i>Southern Alberta Victim's Assistance Program (SAVA)</i>	<i>\$55,000</i>
<i>Victim Services Society of Stony Plain, Spruce Grove &amp; District</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
<i>Tofield &amp; Area Victims Services Association</i>	<i>\$13,000</i>
<i>Two Hills and Area Victim Services Society</i>	<i>\$12,000</i>
<i>Crisis Association of Vegreville</i>	<i>\$11,160</i>
<i>Westlock Community Victim Services Unit Association</i>	<i>\$18,000</i>
<i>Wetaskiwin &amp; District Victim Services Society</i>	<i>\$19,150</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$764,610</i>



## Introduction

Information on the activities of victims service programs was collected using the Quarterly Report Form. The Report collects information on the number of new cases, the number of persons assisted, and the type of assistance provided. For each of these variables, the Report categorizes assistance provided as either *Criminal Code – Violent* (e.g. homicide, violent sex offences, serious assaults, etc.), *Criminal Code – Non-violent* (e.g. forgery, fraud, break and enter, etc.), *Offence Non-criminal* (offences that do not fall within the *Criminal Code of Canada*, i.e., Provincial Statute Offences) or *Assistance – No offence* (e.g. sudden death, notifying next-of-kin, motor vehicle collisions, suicide, etc.).

The Report also measures the use of volunteer hours, the number of victim impact statements completed and filed with the Court and the number of restitution requests completed and forwarded to the Crown prosecutor's office.

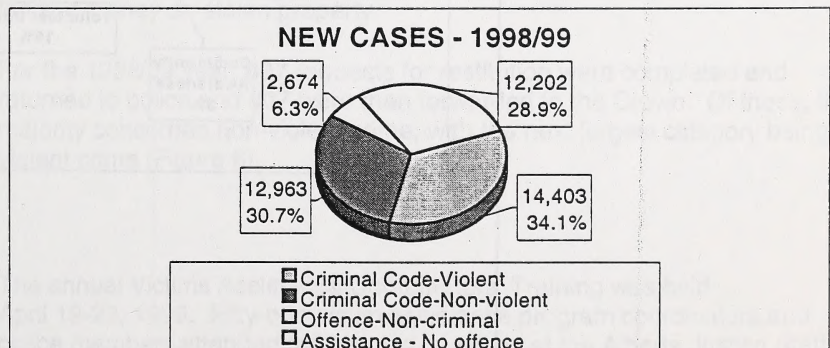
The statistics reported herein were collected from 85 police-based victim service units that submitted a full year's data and 11 police-based victim service units that submitted data for part of the 1998/99 fiscal year. As well, four community-based programs submitted statistics for that year.

Only programs funded by Alberta Justice are required under their funding agreements to submit these statistics, although some non-funded programs also submit them. Data was submitted for only part of the year in cases where units were only operational for part of the year or only funded for part of the year.

## New Cases

During 1998/99 victim service programs reported handling 42,242 new cases. New cases refers to only cases (files) opened during the reporting quarter. A case may involve one or more victims, and family members or friends affected by an incident of crime.

Figure 3



Of the 42,242 new cases, the majority (34.1%) involved assisting victims of violent *Criminal Code* offences (Figure 3). Assistance was least often provided when the offence was Non-criminal (i.e., a Provincial Statute Offence).



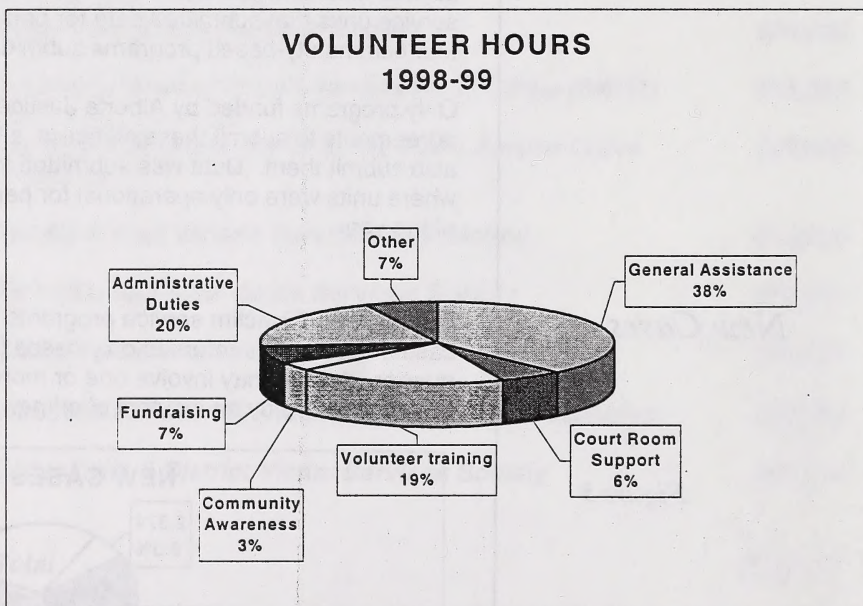
## Volunteer Hours

Assistance was most often provided when the incident/offence was in the *Criminal Code – Violent*, the *Criminal Code – Non-violent* or *Assistance – No offence* categories. Assistance was least likely to be provided where the incident/offence was in the *Offence – Non-criminal* category.

In 1998/99, approximately 1,273 volunteer advocates and Board members contributed a total of 178,388 volunteer hours, which equates to 91 man-years. This figure also includes hours volunteered by program staff over and above their paid time. During the same year, programs employed 41 full-time and 46 part-time paid staff.

As would be expected, the majority (38%) of volunteers' time was spent providing general assistance (information, intervention and referrals) to victims. Twenty percent of volunteer hours were dedicated to administrative duties, followed closely by training, at 19%. The remaining hours were spent on fundraising (7%), other activities, such as meetings and travel time (7%), court room support (6%) and community awareness (3%) (Figure 6).

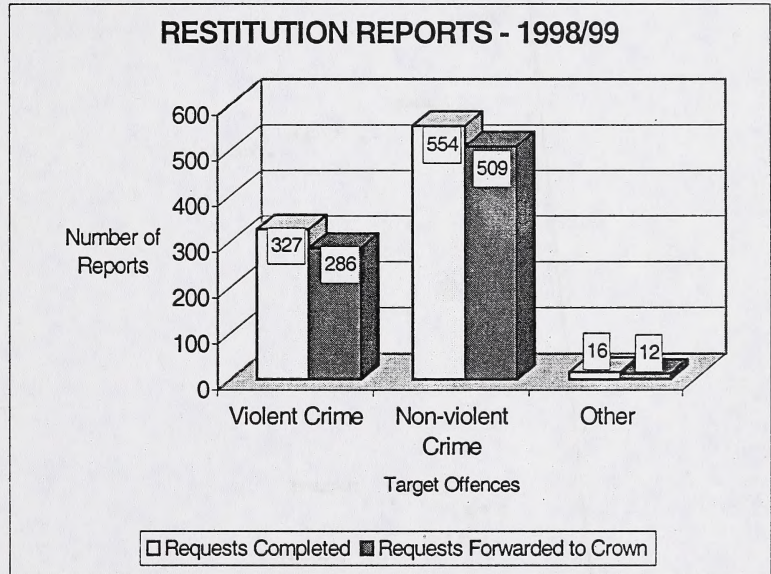
Figure 6





## Restitution Program

Figure 8



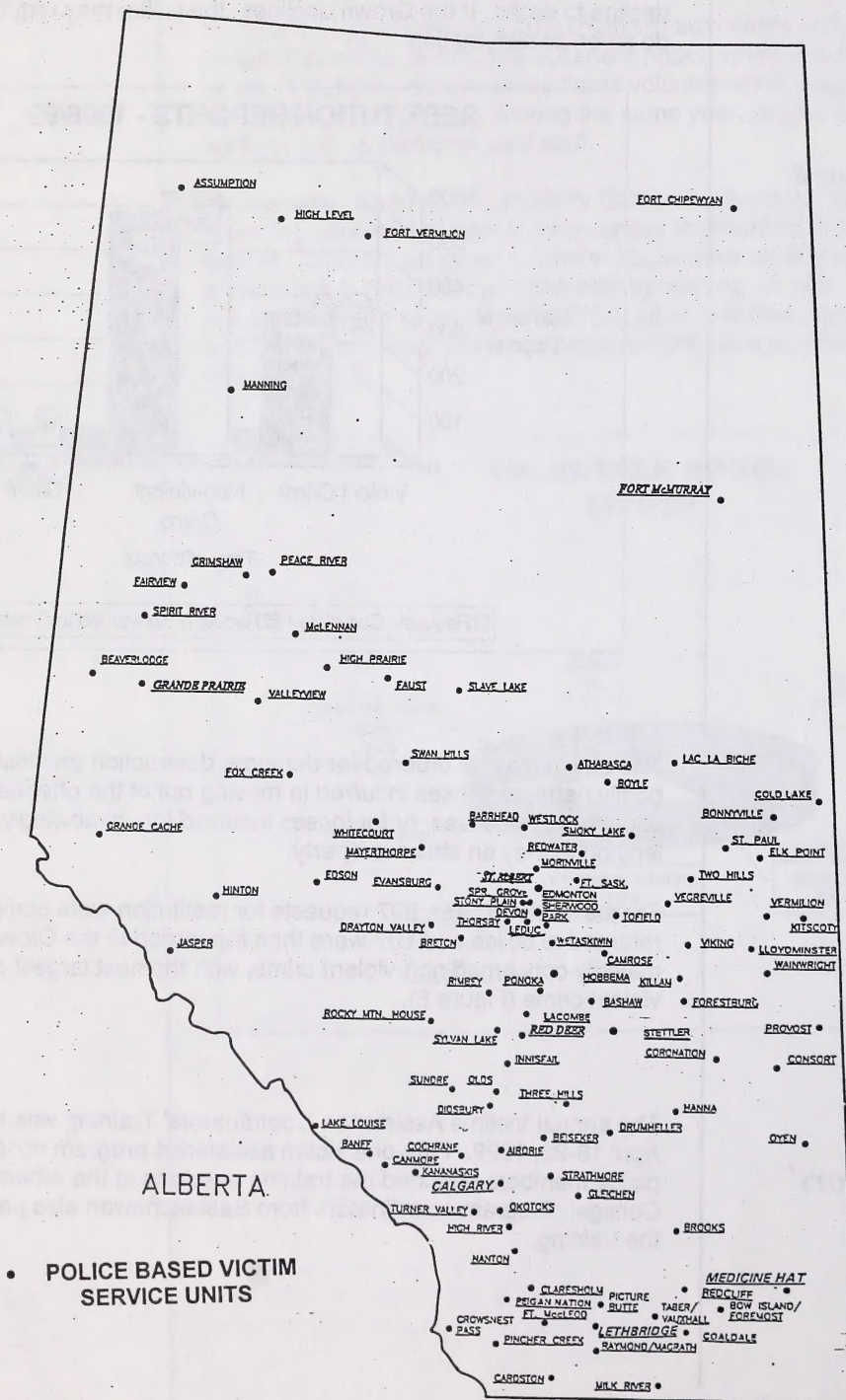
Restitution may be ordered for damage, destruction and loss of property, bodily harm, expenses incurred in moving out of the offender's house, as in spousal abuse cases, or for losses incurred by unknowingly purchasing or lending money on stolen property.

For the 1998/99 year, 897 requests for restitution were completed and returned to police and 807 were then forwarded to the Crown. Of these, the majority concerned non-violent crime, with the next largest category being violent crime (Figure 8).

The annual Victims Assistance Coordinators' Training was held April 19-23, 1999. Fifty-one victim assistance program coordinators and police members attended the training sessions at the Alberta Justice Staff College. Program coordinators from Saskatchewan also participated in the training.

## Victims Assistance Coordinators' Training

## APPENDIX A POLICE BASED VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS 1998/1999









Bibliothèque nationale du Canada



3 3286 52105617 2